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ABSTRACT

This report examines how well minority students are achieving in North Carolina schools. It is intended to inform parents, education leaders, policymakers, and the public about the crisis in North Carolina's public education system. Data show that too many minority students continue to be unprepared for high stakes testing. Scholastic Assessment Test results show a gap in achievement between minority children and their white counterparts. Minority students continue to have disproportionately high discipline and dropout rates. They are underrepresented in honors and advanced courses and overrepresented in special education. There has been a dramatic and steady decline in the number of minority teachers in the past 2 decades, so minority children are unlikely to be taught by instructors who share their own racial/ethnic heritage. Teachers need professional development in order for all students to be taught by competent, caring, qualified instructors. Additional funding is needed, though it must be targeted. This report presents Judge Manning's findings from the fourth ruling in the Leandro lawsuit that defines the state's responsibility to provide equal access to a sound basic education for all North Carolina children. Previous recommendations for improving the achievement gap, and progress made toward those recommendations, are included. (Contains 17 references.) (SM)

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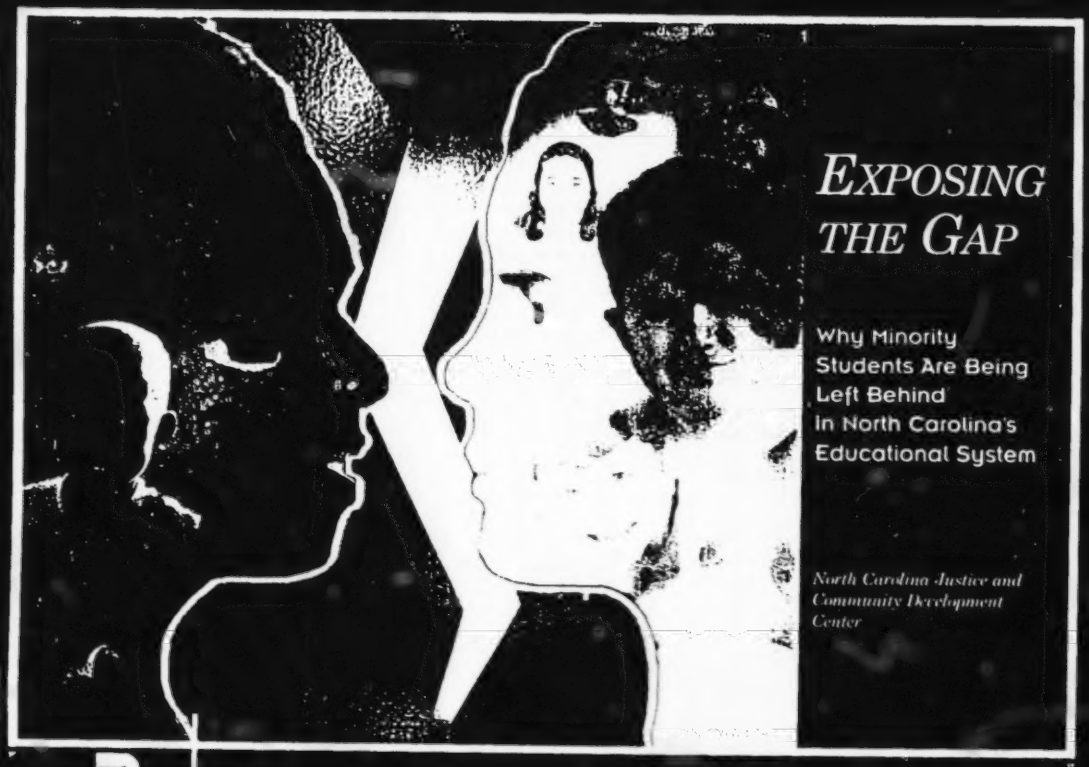

EXPOSING THE GAP

Why Minority Students Are Being Left Behind In North Carolina's Educational System

North Carolina Justice and Community Development Center

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The Achievement Gap 2002

AN UPDATE

HOW MINORITY STUDENTS ARE FARING IN NORTH CAROLINA'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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The Achievement Gap 2002

AN UPDATE

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Introduction

The N.C. Justice and Community Development Center (Justice Center) first focused the spotlight on the minority achievement gap in a major policy report, *Exposing the Gap*, released in January 2000. Our report presented facts and figures that illustrated a disturbingly wide and persistent gap in academic achievement between minority and majority students, and a list of recommendations for closing that gap. A January 2001 update assessed the progress that had been made to close the gap and again made recommendations for closing it. Regrettably, at the close of yet another school year, the minority achievement gap remains virtually unchanged. We release this 2002 report in our ongoing effort to inform parents, education leaders, policymakers and the public about this crisis in our public education system.

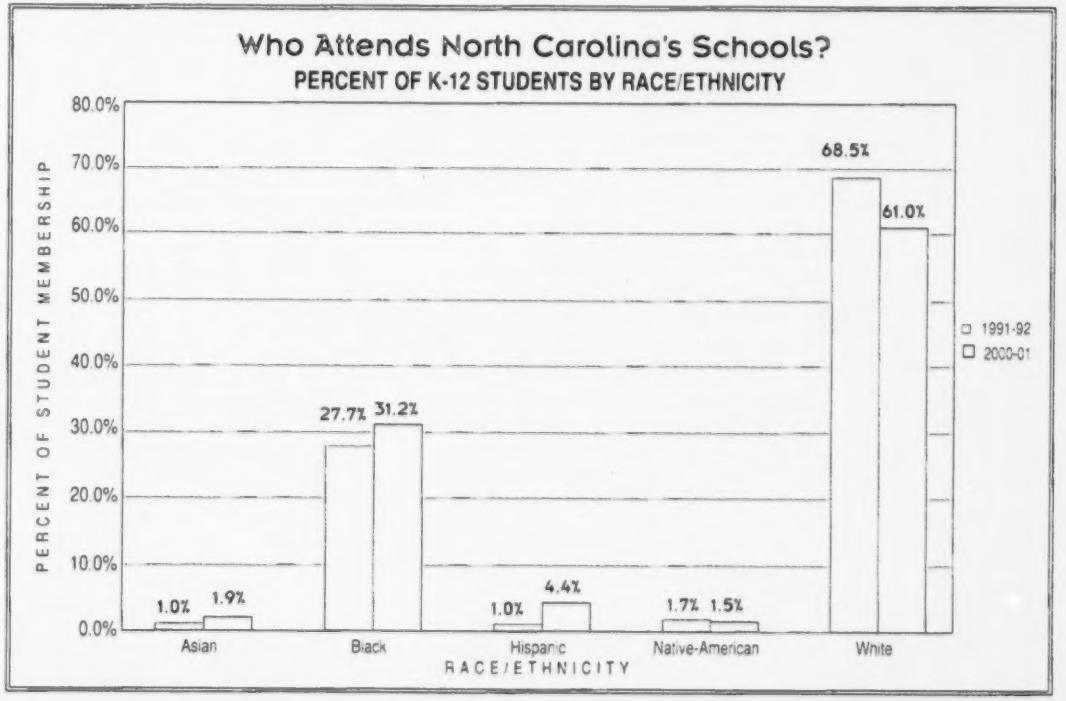
In 1997, the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled in the *Leandro* school finance case, that all of the State's children are constitutionally entitled to an equal opportunity to receive a sound basic education. On April 4, 2002, Superior Court Judge Howard Manning issued his fourth ruling in *Leandro* holding that the State of North Carolina bears the ultimate responsibility for ensuring that this constitutional mandate is met. But this report finds that a significant number of children of color-Black, Hispanic and Native American students-are not receiving a sound basic education.

We have looked to the State's own measurement system, the "ABCs" standardized testing program, to determine how well minority students are faring in our public schools. The State's report card on student performance shows minority student performance lagging as much as 30 percentage points behind majority students on End-of-Grade (EOG) tests for the 2000-2001 school year.

Succeeding in the world of education is not a luxury; it is a necessity. Our world grows increasingly more interconnected and full participation in a democratic society requires a knowledge and understanding of more than one's own backyard. The workplace continues to require workers who not only possess

An Increasing Minority Student Population

Over the past several years the makeup of our state's student population has shifted dramatically. As the chart below illustrates, today's students are more diverse than students attending school less than a decade ago.



complex skills but the ability to think interpretively and analytically.

While state and local leaders have taken encouraging steps to improve minority student achievement since the release of *Exposing the Gap*, there is still much to be done. The achievement gap continues to represent a crisis in our education system that should be given priority over all other education issues. Failing to act leaves tens-of-thousands of minority students trapped in a cycle of academic non-achievement and facing a future of unfulfilled dreams and expectations. Failing to educate all of our citizens has long-range social and economic impact on our state, creating a citizenry ill equipped to handle the challenges of the 21st century.

The number of minority students in our schools increases each year. With each passing year that the gap persists, schools risk losing ground in the effort to close the gap. In our 2001 progress report, we predicted that 40% of students attending North Carolina's public schools in 2005 would be members of a racial or ethnic minority. We may need to amend that prediction. For the 2000-2001 school year, 39% of public school students were members of a racial or ethnic minority group.

Exposing the Gap listed three principal reasons that closing the achievement gap should be given priority above all other education issues. These reasons bear repeating:

1. **The Political Imperative** – support for public education by parents and the general public is crucial for our public education system to survive and continue. At the moment, that support is very fragile, especially among minority parents who often do not believe that their children are receiving an education that is equal to that of other students. As a result, minority parents are increasingly willing to listen to those in our society who would like to privatize our public education system. Therefore, we must act now to address the achievement gap, or risk losing the last great public institution that binds us together as a people.
2. **The Economic Imperative** – The lack of a quality education means that a student's economic life chances are greatly diminished. Put simply, to be uneducated is to be economically poor. Equally important is the impact that failing to educate minority students would have on our state's economy. In the new global economy, the talents and skills of every citizen will be needed if North Carolina is to be competitive. Thus, we simply cannot afford to fail so many of our students.
3. **The Moral Imperative** – For the past thirty years we have worked to breakdown the system of racial segregation that fostered unequal educational opportunity in the past. We ended segregation in our state because it was morally wrong to relegate one group of children to a life without the benefit of a decent education. Today, the issue is not segregation but the achievement gap. It is educationally unjustifiable for the gap to exist and to be perpetuated any longer. Thus, we have a moral obligation to take affirmative steps to end the gap with all deliberate speed.

As you read this report, it is important to keep in mind that there are schools in North Carolina that are successfully closing the achievement gap; schools, staffed by dedicated educators, who affirm on a daily

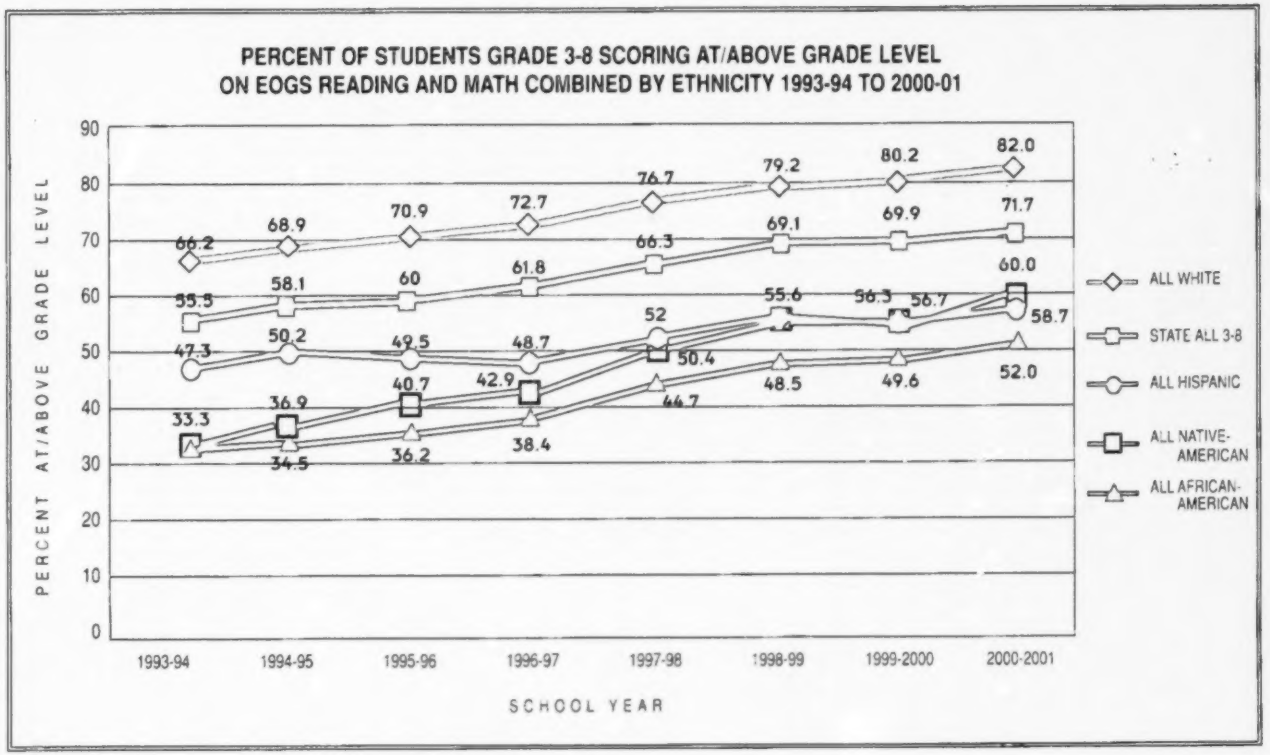
basis that all children can learn. We must examine these schools and learn from their example. We hope that this update will inform and inspire state leaders to continue to take aggressive action to close the achievement gap in the coming year. The goal of making North Carolina schools "First in America" by 2010 is only eight years away.[1]

Too Many Minority Students Continue to be Unprepared for High Stakes Testing

It has become something of a ritual. Every spring, flowers bloom, birds sing and North Carolina's school children take tests. These tests are a significant part of North Carolina's school accountability reform program known as the ABC's of Public Education.

Under the Student Accountability Standards, students in grades 3 through 8 take a test in the spring of each school year in reading and math. The tests are usually multiple choice and the students are asked to pick the correct answer. Students are given a limited amount of time to complete the tests. Based on these test results, students' scores are converted into four levels of performance-Levels I, II, III and IV. Students are considered to be at grade level or "proficient" if their scores are at Level III or higher.

The Standards, also known as Gateways, were officially used for fifth graders for the 2000-2001 school year. If a child was a fifth grader for the 2000-2001 year, his or her promotion was tied to the End-of-Grade (EOG) test scores. Under the ABC's program, as of the 2001-2002 school year, all students in grades 3, 5, and 8 were required to take an end-of-grade exam in math and reading. Schools will use the results of the EOG tests to make important decisions about the educational future of students, including decisions



A Warning about Using Standardized Tests to Make High Stakes Decisions about Individual Students

Although this report relies on test scores to illustrate the depth and breadth of the achievement gap, it must be emphasized that there is danger in placing total reliance on test scores to determine the educational performance of students. Each year North Carolina students take more standardized tests than virtually any other group of students in the nation. There are inherent problems with this over-reliance on tests to make important decisions, particularly as they pertain to individual children. For one, the obsession with tests has de-emphasized individual student learning and replaced it with teaching to the test. Second, many students simply do not test well. This is particularly the case for many minority students as confirmed by a growing body of educational research suggesting that minorities perform below their potential depending on how high the stakes are for a given test. There is clear evidence that state standardized tests used under the ABC's Program have inherent errors and are far from being a perfect measure of what students know. There also is the question of racial or cultural test bias. Test makers continue to find test questions that are unfair because some students have cultural experiences that give them a competitive disadvantage in answering particular questions. Lastly, there are wide differences in the skill level of teachers and in school resources across North Carolina. These differences often translate into unequal educational opportunities.

about grade promotion. These EOG test results are also used to determine the performance of schools and to award bonuses to teachers. Schools that have a large number of students who perform poorly on the EOG may be required to accept outside assistance from the State to help improve the school.

Over the past several years, all students have improved their performance on the EOG; however, there continues to be a gap in achievement between white students and minority students. The test scores for 2000/2001 reveal that while 82% of the state's white students are performing at or above grade level in reading and math, only 52% of the state's black students are making Level III or above in math and reading. This means that almost half (48%) of black students are not performing at grade level as measured by the EOG. Native-American and Hispanic students also have fewer students performing at or above grade level than do white students.

Records of student performance on the EOG tests date back to 1993. A review of those records shows that the minority achievement gap has remained relatively constant. For example, in 1993 the gap between black and white student performance was 33%; in 2001 the gap decreased to 30%, a gain of only 3%.

According to the State, the tests are used to gauge school and student proficiency and performance. Based on the last seven years of test scores, nearly half of all minority students are not demonstrating proficiency. It seems a logical conclusion that based on its own measurement standard, the State's public school system is failing to perform in a proficient manner its constitutional duty to provide all children with an equal opportunity for a sound basic education.

Traditionally, spring is a season of promise, yet for many of our state's minority children, spring means stress, frustration and failure. It is imperative that we close the ongoing achievement gap and give all of our children the promise of tomorrow.

Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) Results Show a Gap in Achievement

The SAT is a college entrance exam widely used by colleges and universities to make decisions regarding college admissions. Not performing well on the SAT severely limits a student's opportunities for higher education. When North Carolina's SAT results are broken down by race, African-American, Hispanic and Native-American students consistently score below their white counterparts. For example, the 2001 SAT scores reveal that North Carolina's black-white scoring gap increased to 206 points, a widening of six points from the previous year. Nationally, the black-white gap increased to 201 points in 2001 compared to 198 points the previous year. The SAT scoring gap is not new; tracking of SAT scores by race from 1994 to 2001 reveals that rather than narrowing, the gap has increased.[2]

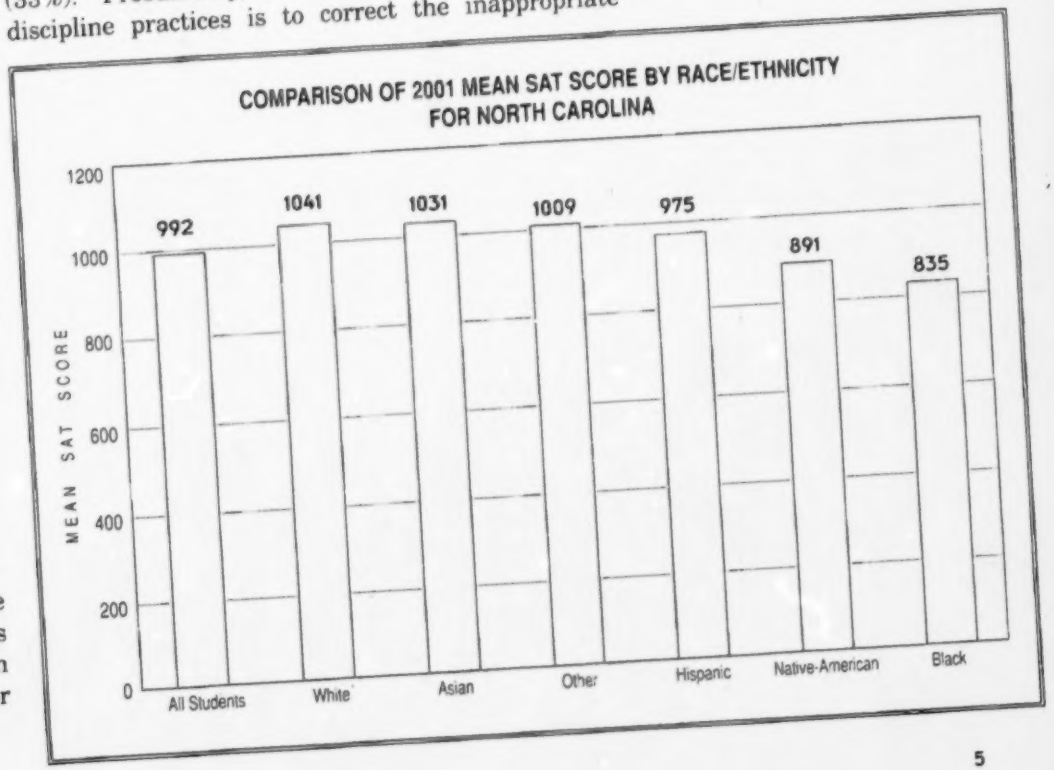
This gap in SAT performance has lasting consequences on minority students' abilities to have a variety of meaningful choices post-high school.

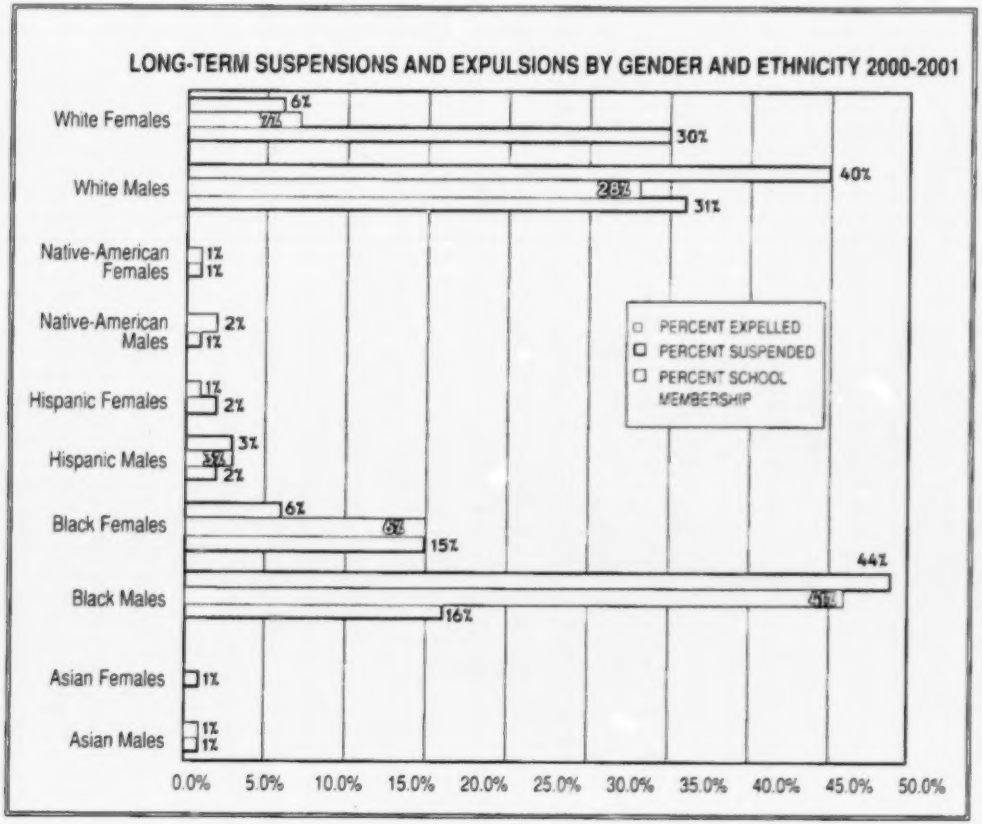
Minority Students Continue to have Disproportionately High Discipline Rates

In 2000 and again in 2001 we reported that the "get tough" approach to school discipline was resulting in more students being excluded from the education process. The latest figures support our assessment.

In the 2000-2001 school year, the overall rate for Long-Term Suspensions[3] (LTS), increased by 22% from the 1999-2000 school term. Although black males account for only 16% of the student population, they account for the highest percentage of LTS in both 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 (39% and 41% respectively). Black males are also overrepresented in the number of students expelled, accounting for the highest percentage of expulsions in both 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 (47% and 44% respectively).[4]

Aggressive or undisciplined behavior is the leading cause for long-term suspensions (36%) and expulsions (33%).[5] Presumably, the motivation behind these discipline practices is to correct the inappropriate





behavior.[6] However, research shows that removing a child from school for extended periods of time is an ineffective method for improving behavior. Not surprisingly, early intervention to head off behavior problems and teaching practices that promote student engagement are more effective methods of behavior management. Research suggests that children who have behavior problems often feel disconnected from the culture of the school. Removing the child from the school environment only serves to further increase her feeling of not belonging, and repeated behavior problems are likely.[7] Schools with effective discipline have plans and procedural structures in place to address disruptive behavior. Such schools enlist parents, teachers and administrators to serve on school safety teams or behavior support teams. The teams offer a consistent and individualized response to disruptive students with the goal to help the child control the behavior and remain in school.[8]

National research also supports that school suspension is a moderate to strong predictor of whether a student will drop out of school.[9] According to a comprehensive national study done in the 1980s, more than 30% of sophomores who drop out of school had been suspended at a rate three times that of their peers who stayed in school.[10]

It seems obvious--students must be present in school in order to perform well in school. Students who are excluded from school have higher dropout rates, repeated incidents of misbehavior and lower levels of academic achievement, all of which contribute to the achievement gap. In the interest of our children, the State must assess the current discipline practices in place in each school system and work with parents, teachers and administrators to revamp current practices that result in the exclusion of far too many students from the education process.

Minority Students Continue to have Disproportionately High Dropout Rates

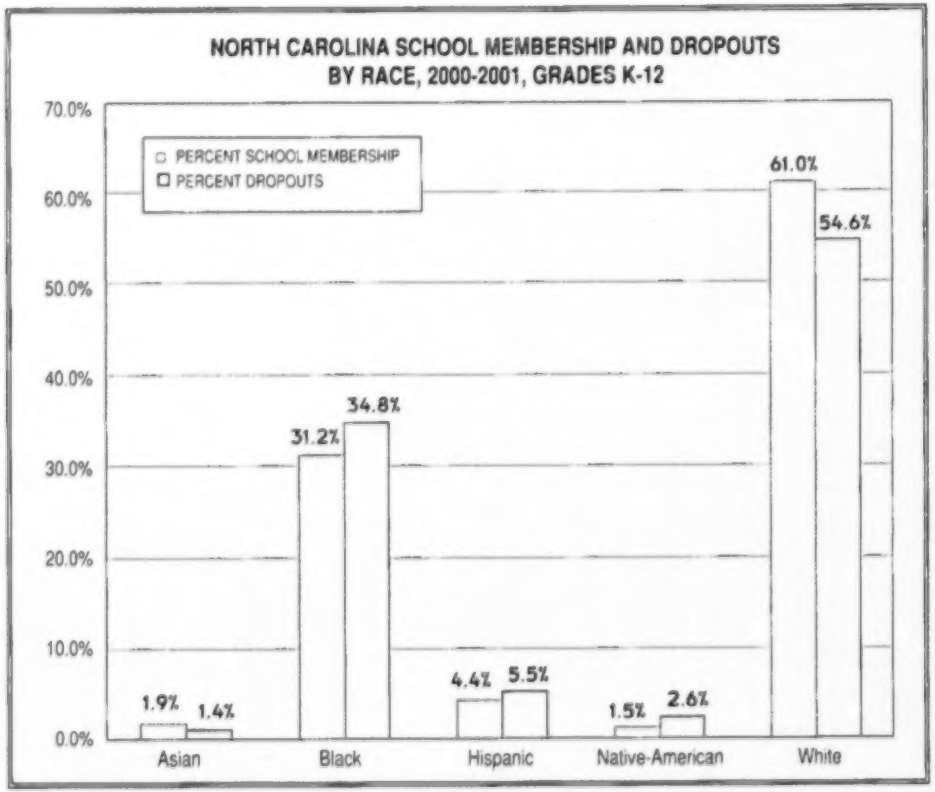
The good news is that the dropout numbers decreased 9% from 1999-00 to 2000-01. The bad news is that there were still 22,365 children who dropped out of North Carolina's schools in 2000-01. As the chart shows, ethnic and racial minorities are disproportionately represented in the dropout rate, with Blacks, Hispanics and Native Americans dropping out at a much higher rate in relation to their overall representation in the school population than Whites.[11]

The dropout rate tells us how well our schools are doing in keeping our children in school-an outcome that predicts future employment, earnings and overall social condition for students. According to a 1997 US Census Bureau report, on average, high school dropouts earn $6300 per year less than a high school graduate.[12] The gap in earnings is more dramatic, the higher the level of educational achievement. A graduate of a four year college with a bachelor's degree earns an average of $20,400 more than a high school dropout and a professional degree holder $53,000.[13]

Failing to graduate from high school has a lasting impact on an individual's future, often condemning her to a life of poverty and depriving her of opportunities for self-fulfillment. Young people drop out of school for a variety of reasons, but at the top of the list is lack of academic achievement. Studies have shown that early academic achievement and engagement in elementary and middle school is a powerful motivation to stay in school, making closing the achievement gap all the more imperative.

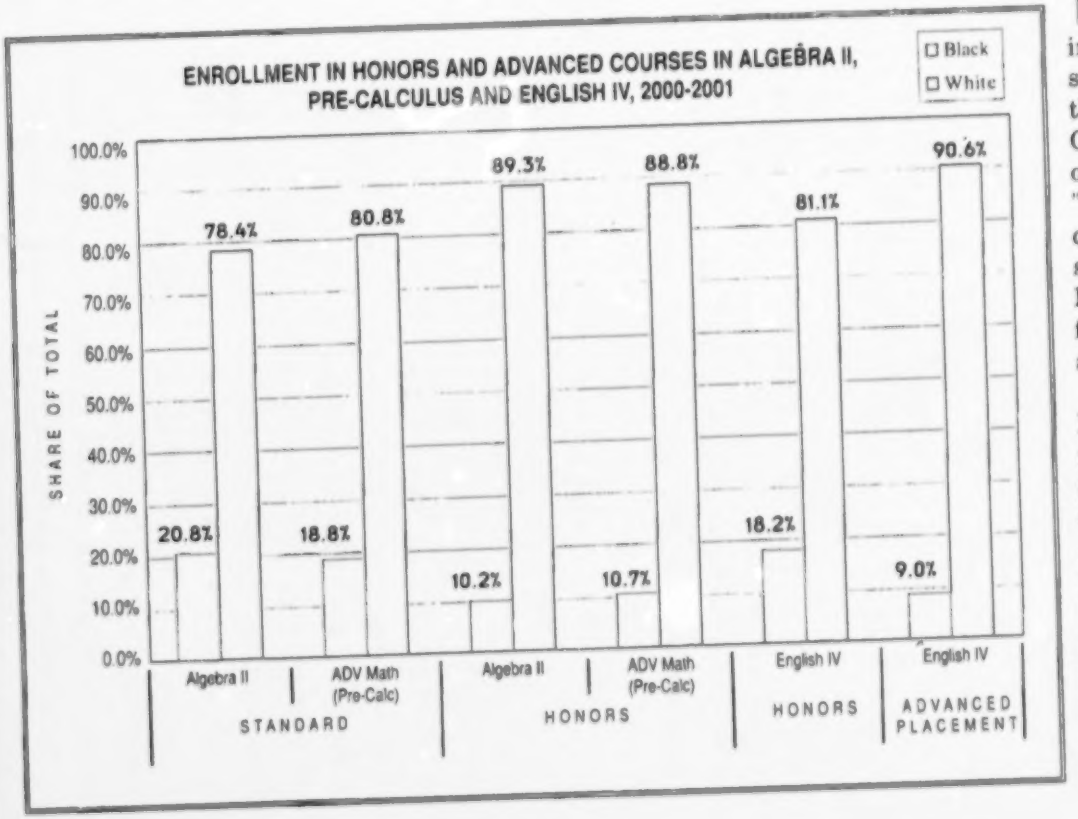
It is a simple equation: dropping out of school results in limited life opportunities. To ensure that all children have unlimited life opportunities, developing effective programs to prevent students from leaving school early must be a State mandate. Consistently the same components are noted as essential to successful dropout prevention programs:

- attendance outreach program/ alternative



schools-providing means for all students to participate in some formalized educational setting

- mentoring and tutoring program-providing all students with an opportunity to have the benefit of at least one caring adult
- conflict resolution and guidance component-one on one counseling
- summer enhancement-opportunity for all students to complete, advance and increase skill levels as needed[14]



The State must take the lead in evaluating the status of dropout prevention programs in North Carolina and take steps to ensure that there are such programs in each and every school system in the state.

Minority Students are Underrepresented in Honors and Advanced Courses

Education research confirms that accelerated programs for gifted students, combined with a curriculum of challenging academic subjects, increases learning for students who participate in such coursework. The December 2001 report from the NC Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps recommends that schools provide opportunities for minority students to be exposed to "...advanced content, challenging strategies, and quality work..." as a means of increasing minority student achievement and closing the gap. But in North Carolina's public schools, minority faces are few in programs for the gifted and in honors and advanced placement courses.

For the 1999-2000 school year, black students represented about 30% of the overall student population, but only about 10% of the enrollment in elementary and middle school programs for academically and intellectually gifted (AIG) students.[15] The picture at the high school level is equally dismal. For example, during the 2000-2001 school year, black students made up 18.2% of students enrolled in Honors English IV; white students accounted for 81.1%. As the chart indicates, the gap between black/white enrollments in advanced placement (AP) English is even wider.

Blacks are also underrepresented in higher-level math courses. For the 2000-2001 school year, black students comprised 20.8% of the students enrolled in regular Algebra II as compared to 78.4% for white students. The disparity is even more pronounced for Honors Algebra II: 10.2% black and 89.3% white. Other minority groups constitute less than 1% of students enrolled in higher-level math and/ or English courses.

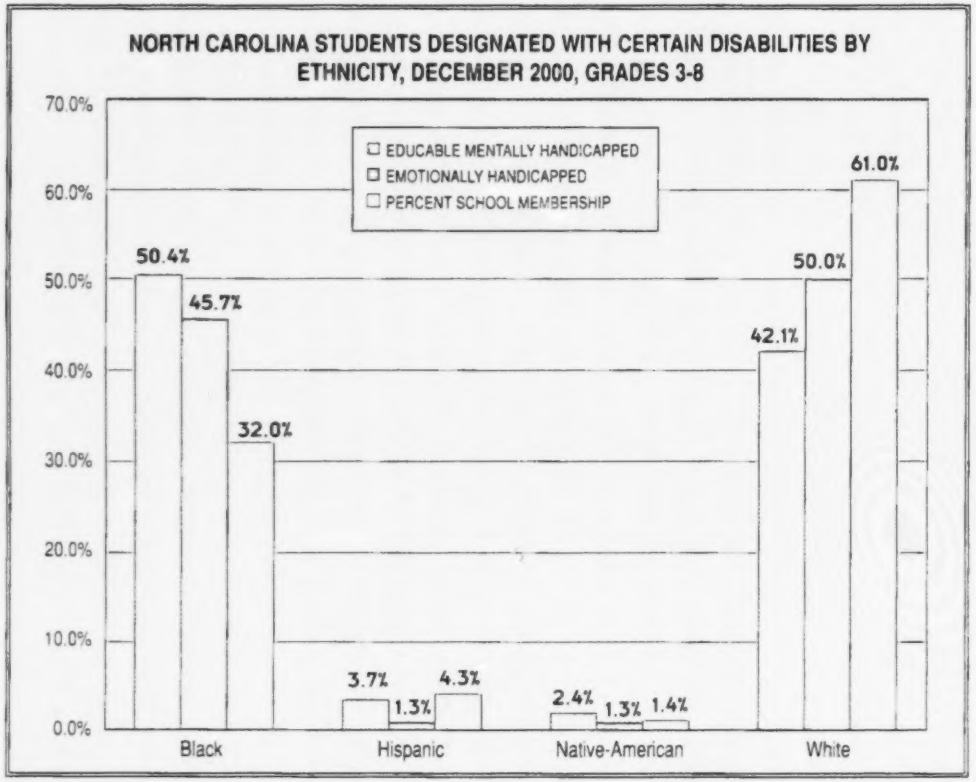
Thousands of minority students, fully capable of excelling academically, are being denied educational opportunities that would allow them to reach their maximum potential. College admission offices look favorably upon a transcript that shows that a student has engaged in rigorous academic work.

For example, the UNC system schools' minimum undergraduate admission standards require that an applicant has successfully completed three years of mathematics-Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. A freshman entering a UNC system school for the first time in 2006 will need to have an additional higher-level math course for a total of four math courses. The low enrollment of black students and other minorities in higher-level math courses results in denied opportunities to obtain what many consider to be among the best and most affordable college educations available.

AP courses also play a significant role in college admissions. The Advanced Placement Program allows students to complete college-level studies while still in high school. At the end of the AP course, students take an exam. If they make the required score on the AP exam, then the students may use the AP course for college credit and/ or for course placement. More than 90% of colleges and universities nationwide permit credit and/ or placement for students making qualifying scores on AP exams. In 2000, of the 19,249 North Carolina students taking AP exams, 81.2% were white and 8.7% were black. Of the white students taking the tests, 58% made a passing score of three or higher, contrasted with 26.5% of black students. The number of black students achieving a score of three or higher has decreased gradually since 1997.[16]

Minority Students are Overrepresented in Special Education Programs

There is perhaps no greater tragedy than extinguishing a child's potential. Inappropriate placement of a child, who is not disabled, into a special education category, does just that. Such a placement undercuts a student's self-esteem and burdens her with a lifelong label that profoundly limits her economic and educational future. Because teachers often initiate identification of children as special needs, the ability of teachers to understand the diverse cultural background of all students is essential if such identification is to be accurate. State statistics show that African-American and Hispanic children are overrepresented in two distinct disability categories: Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) and Behaviorally Emotionally Handicapped (BEH). The 2000-2001 ABCs report reveals that students identified as EMH and BEH performed poorly based on the composite scores for math and reading in grades three through eight; 26% of BEH students and 3% of EMH students scored Level III or above. In comparison, 99.5% of students identified as academically gifted scored at or above Level III.



Special education programs play an important role in the education system and should not be denied to students in need of such programs. However, to the extent that these placements in special education programs are inappropriate, they contribute to maintaining the achievement gap.

The Need for More Minority Teachers and Professional Development for All Teachers

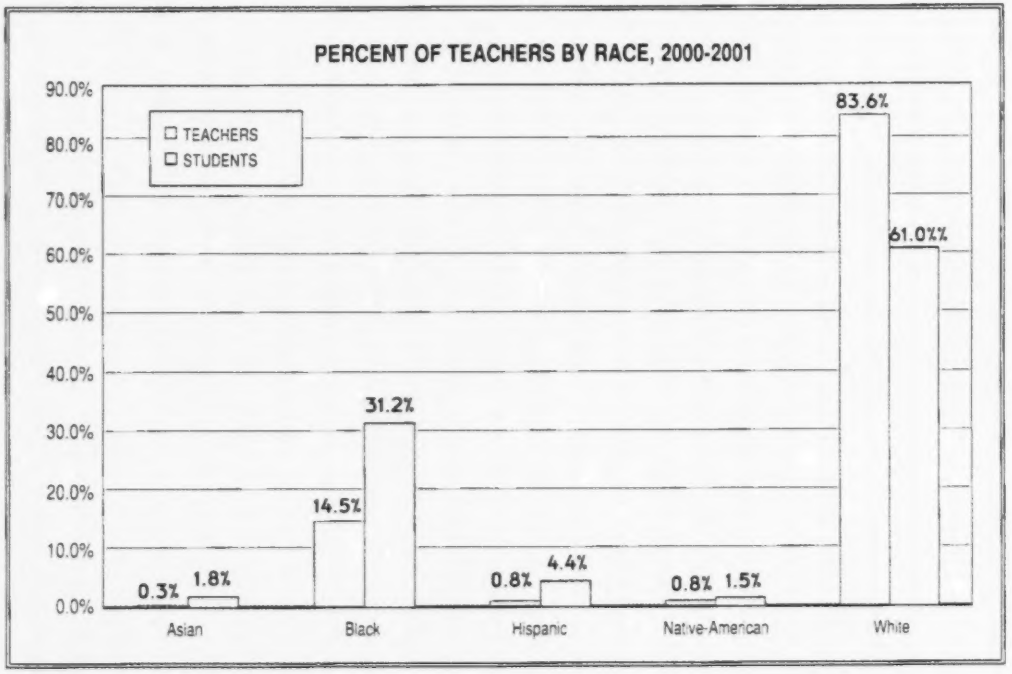
There has been a dramatic and steady decline in the number of minority teachers in the past two decades.[17] On a daily basis, minority children are unlikely to be taught by instructors who share their own racial or ethnic heritage. Part of the solution to closing the achievement gap must be a focused effort on recruiting and retaining more minority teachers.[18] But there must also be a concentrated effort on ensuring that all teachers, regardless of their own race, ethnicity, or cultural heritage, are equipped to meet the needs of a diverse student population.

Effective teaching is based on more than knowledge of the subject matter. Effective teachers must know as much about how to teach, as what they teach. Effective teachers recognize the powerful role that ethnic and cultural differences play in influencing learning. A number of studies have documented that student learning is dramatically increased when teachers recognize the diversity of their students.[19]

According to findings in the December 2001 report from the North Carolina Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps, the most significant factor in closing the achievement gap is ensuring that every student is taught by "...competent, caring, qualified teachers in schools organized for success." The Commission bases its findings on solid educational research that shows that there are gains in achievement for students who are assigned

to highly effective teachers each year. However, having several ineffective teachers in a row significantly lowers student achievement.[20]

In our previous reports, we have urged education leaders and schools of education to implement programs that require both pre-service and in-service teachers to undergo training which develops the understanding and skills needed to teach in the diverse classroom of the new century. The new century is now upon us.



Additional Funding is Needed, But It Must Be Targeted

There is no direct requirement in the April 4, 2002 Leandro school finance lawsuit decision that the State supply additional funding to Local Education Agencies (LEAs); however Judge Howard Manning allows for additional funding as a distinct possibility if that is what it takes to provide every student with an equal opportunity for a sound basic education. Judge Manning writes, "The solution may or may not require the expenditure of additional funds so long as the Leandro mandate is followed." Throughout the decision he stresses that the State must require LEAs to implement cost effective educational programs in their schools to provide all children with an equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education. Judge Manning also makes clear that if necessary the State must seek out additional resources to accomplish this goal.

It is our belief that the court decision in the Leandro school finance case will require additional funds to implement strategies to insure that the state fulfills its constitutional education obligations. An infusion of new dollars will be needed so that schools can implement programs that will improve student achievement such as providing high-quality preschool programs for at-risk four year olds, reducing class size, and providing tutoring and other individualized instruction in summer and after-school programs. Additional funding is particularly needed to fully fund the state's special education program for disabled

Six Things That Concerned Parents Can Do

1. ***Know how your child is performing in school and stay fully involved in your child's education.***
2. ***Review the information in this report to determine how well your local school system is educating minority students.***
3. ***Share this report with other concerned parents and discuss ways that your local schools can improve minority achievement. Consider forming a parent organization in your community that will make ending the Minority Achievement Gap a priority issue.***
4. ***Share this report with teachers, school principals, elected school board members and other education leaders to ensure that they are fully aware of the achievement gap.***
5. ***Let your elected representatives and school officials know of your concerns about the achievement gap.***
6. ***Meet with education officials in your community, present your ideas on how to improve minority student achievement and, stay abreast of progress towards closing the achievement gap.***

students and to educate the nearly 40,000 limited-English proficient (LEP) students who need special help in learning to read and write English. An additional way of providing more funds to address the achievement gap is to earmark more money for "at-risk" students. Although additional funding will be needed to end the achievement gap, money alone will not close the gap. Successful experiences from many schools suggest that schools can already do much more to eliminate the gap by firmly committing to closing the gap and by targeting existing resources to programs designed to address the gap.

Below are Judge Manning's findings from the fourth ruling in the Leandro lawsuit that define the responsibilities of the State to provide an equal opportunity to a sound basic education to every child in North Carolina.

Leandro – Hoke County and Beyond – Court Findings

1 In 1997, the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that children have a constitutional right to an equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education. The Leandro mandate requires that every child be afforded the opportunity to attend a public school, which at minimum has the following educational resources.

- Every classroom must be staffed with a competent, certified, well-trained teacher who is teaching the Standard Course of Study by implementing effective educational methods that provide differentiated, individualized instruction, assessment and remediation to the students in that classroom.
- Every classroom must be led by a well-trained competent principal with leadership skills and the ability to hire and retain competent, certified and well-trained teachers who can implement an effective and cost-effective instructional program that meets the needs of at-risk children so that they can have the equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education by achieving grade level or above academic performance.
- Every school must be provided, in the most cost effective manner, the resources necessary to support effective instruction within that school so that all children, including at-risk children, have the equal opportunity to obtain a sound basic education.

2. There are children at-risk of educational failure who are not being provided the equal opportunity to a sound basic education because their particular LEA, such as Hoke County Public Schools, is not providing them with one or more of the basic educational services set out in paragraph 1, above.

3. The State is ultimately responsible for providing each child with access to a sound basic

education and this responsibility cannot be abdicated by transferring responsibility to local boards of education.

4. The State is ordered to remedy the Constitutional deficiency for those children who are not being provided the basic educational services set out in paragraph 1, whether they are in Hoke County or another county within the State.

5. The nuts and bolts of how this task should be accomplished is not the province of the Court but of the Executive and Legislative Branches of Government.

6. The Court's three prior Memoranda of Decisions entered on October 12, 2000, October 26, 2000 and March 26, 2001 and as amended by the Order entered May 29, 2001 are incorporated as part of this Memorandum of Decision and Judgment. All four Memoranda of Decision constitute the Decision and Judgment of this Court.

7. The State is directed to keep the plaintiff-parties fully informed of the progress of its efforts to remedy the constitutional deficiencies identified and the plaintiff-parties are directed to fully cooperate with the State in accomplishing its task.

8. The State is directed to keep the Court advised of remedial actions taken by the State by written report filed with the Court every 90 days, or as otherwise may be directed by the Court.

9. The Court retains jurisdiction over this matter for purposes of resolving any remaining issues, including, but not limited to, enforcement of this judgment

Ten Ingredients for Success

Many minority students excel in our public schools. Their experiences confirm that schools can provide a superior education to all students. Across our state, however, schools continue to show marked gaps in achievement levels among student groups. What then makes the difference? In virtually every success story, certain characteristics and common strategies for closing the gap have emerged. Such schools tend to have:

1. Strong leadership provided by school boards, superintendents, principals and lead teachers making the achievement gap a top priority;
2. Explicit measurable goals and timetables for closing the gap;
3. Reporting of disaggregated data by ethnicity and ongoing monitoring of progress;
4. Early identification of low performing students in order to individualize instruction;
5. Targeting of funding to the needs of low-performing students;
6. Reduced class size;
7. Early preschool education programs designed to give students a head start;
8. Hiring and retaining a diverse teaching staff to reflect student population and professional development for teachers;
9. Increased parental involvement by reaching out to minority parents; and,
10. Focused instruction and special intervention programs, such as after-school tutoring and Saturday programs to supplement classroom instruction.

Recommendations

In our two previous reports, the Justice Center made a series of recommendations for policymakers, education leaders, parents, and other concerned citizens to address the achievement gap. In this report, we reiterate some of our most significant recommendations from our earlier reports. In the spirit of this age of assessment, we have assigned a letter grade, from **A** to **F**, which we believe reflects the State's progress in addressing these recommendations. The assigned grade is a composite score based on both the effort made towards implementing the recommendation and the actual progress made in successful implementation.

GRADING SCALE:

A---Exemplary

B---Good

C---Average

D---Poor

F---Failing

1. **Commitment to End the Achievement Gap by 2005:** The Governor, the General Assembly, the State Board of Education, and each local board of education should resolve to take all necessary steps to end the education gap described in this report by the year 2005.

Our suggested target date was 2005; however, the State selected 2010 as the target date for ending the achievement gap. We use the State's 2010 deadline in assessing effort and progress. A significant education initiative on the part of the State is the annual Improving Minority and At-Risk Student Achievement Conference. The sixth annual conference was held in April 2002 and like its predecessors attracted over 2,000 participants who focused on best practices and strategies for improving student achievement. We commend the State for this worthwhile conference; however, while the State has demonstrated that it considers closing the achievement a top priority, it loses points for substantive progress in this category. **GRADE: C+**

2. **Creation of a Permanent Commission to Develop a Comprehensive Plan:** The General Assembly should establish a permanent commission made up of legislators, parents, education leaders and representatives of the business community to monitor the education of minority students in North Carolina and make recommendations for ending the achievement gap.

Appointed in late summer of 2000, the North Carolina Advisory Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps released its first report to the State Board of Education in December 2001. We commend the Advisory Commission for its list of thoughtful recommendations and urge that policymakers and the State Board of Education act aggressively to implement them. Our suggestion: expand the Advisory Commission to include more parents, especially those of minority and special needs students. **GRADE: A-**

3. **Creation of Local Task Forces to Address the Achievement Gap:** The General Assembly and the State Board of Education should require each local school system to form a special local task force made up of parents, educators, the

business community and other groups to develop a five-year plan to end the achievement gap.

The Department of Public Instruction confirmed that there is a plan in place that instructs Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in establishing local task forces. However, the plan does not mandate a timeline for establishing a local task force and the majority of LEAs have not done so. Local school boards currently have discretion as to creating a local task force to address the achievement gap. **GRADE: D**

4. Annual Minority Achievement Report Card: In order to inform parents, the media, educators, policymakers, and members of the general public about progress in ending the achievement gap, the State Board of Education and DPI should annually prepare and broadly disseminate a comprehensive Report Card which reports on the performance of minority students on key indicators of educational success in each local school system in North Carolina.

In August 2001, the Department of Public Instruction released the " Minority Achievement Report 2001: Trends in Subgroup Performance." The report was based on data for school years prior to and including 1999-2000. The report is comprehensive and provides substantive information for those who have access to it. Our suggestion: do a better job of broadly disseminating the report. **GRADE: B**

5. Create a Special Unit Within the Department of Public Instruction: The State Board of Education should establish a new special unit within the Department of Public Instruction, with adequate staff and resources, to ensure that local school systems are aggressively moving to end the achievement gap. Among other things, this unit should be directed and empowered to:

- Receive and respond to complaints from parents alleging disparate treatment of minority students.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of programs designed to improve minority student achievement, broadly disseminate information about programs found to be working and provide local school systems with the technical assistance, training and support which they need in order to end the achievement gap.
- Regularly monitor the educational performance of minority students in the state's local school systems by collecting data on key indicators of educational success including disparities in: (a) test scores; (b) discipline, dropout and graduation rates; (c) overrepresentation in BED and EMD special education placements; and (d) under-representation in academically gifted programs.
- Conduct on-site evaluations of school systems and schools that are failing to effectively address the achievement gap.
- Send assistance teams into schools that demonstrate an inability or unwillingness to address the achievement gap.
- With approval of the State Board of Education, impose sanctions on school systems that do not take affirmative steps to end the achievement gap.

The State Board of Education moved affirmatively to establish a Closing the Gap Division

within the Department of Public Instruction. The Closing the Gap Division provides technical assistance to school districts and conducts original research, including obtaining information from parents and community groups. While the Division began work with schools in January 2002, it has worked primarily with only three schools. We urge that the Division continue forward with the important work of getting input from parents. It is also essential that the State Board of Education take whatever steps necessary to provide this Division with the resources to effectively reach into schools across the state. **GRADE: C-**

6. Suspend New Statewide Student Grade Promotion Policies: The General Assembly and the State Board of Education should suspend the implementation of the new statewide grade promotion standards until the state and school systems are able to provide every child with a sound basic education as required by the state constitution.

To date, the State has not retreated from this failed policy. **GRADE: F**

7. Examine Discipline and Alternative School Policies: Policymakers and education leaders should:

- Reexamine current school discipline policies to ensure that such policies do not contribute to the disproportionately high number of minority student exclusions from school.
- Establish high standards for alternative schools and actively monitor those standards to ensure that students attending these schools are receiving a high quality education.
- Reexamine the law which provides financial rewards to school principals depending on their school's safety record.

The statistics on suspensions and expulsions point out the imperative for examining current discipline practices and policies in our schools. Unfortunately, no change has been forthcoming. Our suggestion: establish a legislative study commission to formally review current discipline practices and alternative school policies and to generate guidelines for more equitable practices and policies. **GRADE: F**

8. Fund Programs That Work: The General Assembly should establish and fully fund programs which will lead to an end in the achievement gap and which insure that every student receives a sound basic education as required by the Constitution. Among the programs which the General Assembly should consider are:

- A statewide preschool program that provides every low-income four-year-old child in North Carolina with a solid educational foundation for entry into the public schools. *Governor Easley has made a start towards providing a preschool program for low-income four-year-olds with "More at Four." However, "More at Four" is far from statewide and does not provide for every low-income four-year-old.* **GRADE: C**
- Reduce class size to no more than 15 students in grades K-3 to promote accelerated learning and to improve school discipline. *Class size for*

grades K-3 remains at 19 students. The governor has proposed a reduction to 18 students for K-3. Thus far, there is no proposal on the table to reduce class size in K-3 to no more than 15 students. **GRADE: D**

- Create smaller schools. *We can find no evidence of any organized effort on the part of policymakers to create smaller schools.* **GRADE: F**

- Follow the recommendation of the Public School Forum and create a special supplemental fund to provide schools with an additional 20% in state funding for each student considered to be at-risk. Such funds should be distributed to schools based solely on the number of at-risk students below grade level. Steps also must be taken to ensure that local school systems target such funding to support special programs for at-risk students. *The State has created a category of funding called the "At-Risk" allotment. However, policymakers have directed schools to use these monies for non-instructional purposes, such as hiring police officers to walk the halls of the State's high schools. Many schools use the monies for programs such as "in-school suspensions." If the existing "at-risk" funds are to impact the achievement gap, they must be targeted towards programs designed to improve student achievement. The current "at-risk" funding does not provide the recommended additional 20% in state funding per at-risk student. It should be noted that the initial recommendation of 20% called only for a modest investment that was not likely to prove adequate in the long run.* **GRADE: D**

- Provide school systems with an extra $1,000 per student to ensure that students whose native language is not English have access to programs designed to instruct these children. *Although there have been increases in funding for Limited English Proficiency students, the increase has been insufficient to meet the needs of our increasing LEP student population. Current LEP funding per student is approximately 50% of the recommended increase of $1,000 per student. We continue to recommend that overall LEP funding be increased by an additional $1,000 per student.* **GRADE: C**

- Fund North Carolina's special education program at the level recommended by state commissions that have examined the issue. *A 1994 report commissioned by the General Assembly, "Addressing the Challenge of Special Education Finance Reform in North Carolina," found that it costs 2.3 times as much to educate a special needs child as it does to educate a regular education student. The Finance Committee of the Governor's Education First Task Force reaffirmed this finding in 2002. In spite of this finding, the State allocation for special needs students is only 1.8 times as much as the allocation for regular education students.* **GRADE: D**

- In order to foster higher levels of minority parental involvement in the effort to close the achievement gap, schools with high numbers of minority students should be provided resources to hire Parent Involvement Coordinators. *According to North Carolina General Statute section 115C-105.32, "A school is encouraged to include a comprehensive parent involvement program as part of its school improvement*

plan..." There has been no action toward a more formal policy of requiring schools with high numbers of minority students to hire Parent Involvement Coordinators. **GRADE: D**

Perhaps we have been unduly harsh with our assessments in recommendation # 8. We have tried to give credit for good intentions. Unfortunately, in words attributed to Samuel Johnson, "The road to hell is paved with good intentions." The priority of the General Assembly should be to ensure that our education system has the resources to provide all of North Carolina's children with "an equal opportunity to a sound basic education." Our policymakers cannot rely on stopgap measures such as a state lottery to address funding education. Members of the state legislature must act responsibly and look to increases in revenue to meet the education needs of all of North Carolina's children. **OVERALL GRADE: D**

9. A Priority for North Carolina Colleges and Universities: North Carolina colleges and universities should make ending the achievement gap a high priority and form consortia designed to promote much wider use of proven strategies for helping minority students achieve at higher levels. Historically minority colleges and universities should continue to provide the excellent leadership on this issue for the higher education community.

Twelve historically minority colleges and universities have formed a partnership with the Department of Public Instruction to address the achievement gap. The Historically Minority Colleges and University Consortium has divided the state into twelve zones, with one of the member schools targeting each zone. The Consortium provides services and technical assistance to public schools within the respective zones. In addition, Consortium members provide training, information and services for parents. **GRADE: B+**

10. Increase the Number of Minority Teachers: The state and local school systems should develop programs and strategies designed to recruit and retain minority teachers.

It was difficult to acquire sufficient information to assess effort and progress on this recommendation. Our conclusion: to be effective, recruitment programs and strategies must, at a minimum be more widely known. **GRADE: F**.

How Well is Your School System Serving African-American Students?

School System	Total Number of Students grades 3-8	% Student Population Black grades3-8	% Student Population White grades 3-8	% of Black Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% ofWhite Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% Gap between Black and White Student Performance on Math/ Reading Composite EOG 2001
STATEWIDE	**623703**	**31.8**	**61.0**	**52.0**	**82.0**	**30.0**
Alamance-Burlington	9702	26.7	63.9	51.2	78.7	27.6
Alexander County	2502	6.2	87.2	52.6	74.2	21.7
Alleghany County	655	0.0	93.9		81.3	
Anson County	1966	60.3	37.1	40.9	73.0	32.1
Ashe County	1485	0.0	97.4		80.0	
Asheboro City	1964	15.4	64.2	45.0	82.4	37.3
Asheville City	1680	45.2	49.2	44.7	90.1	45.3
Avery County	1031	0.0	98.1		85.2	
Beaufort County	3440	42.5	54.6	52.3	78.2	25.9
Bertie County	1675	82.0	17.0	46.2	70.8	24.6
Bladen County	2544	49.9	46.6	48.5	72.0	23.5
Brunswick County	4615	22.0	73.6	56.7	78.2	21.5
Buncombe County	11405	5.3	90.0	56.3	82.7	26.4
Burke County	6857	7.2	80.0	56.5	79.6	23.1
Cabarrus County	8899	13.8	80.0	53.8	84.3	30.5
Caldwell County	5841	7.1	89.3	50.6	79.2	28.6
Camden County	606	16.0	81.5	70.1	85.6	15.5
Carteret County	3749	9.6	86.8	59.8	82.8	23.0
Caswell County	1698	42.1	55.3	50.3	70.0	19.6
Catawba County	7550	6.7	82.0	51.4	78.2	26.8
Chapel Hill/Carrboro	4419	16.0	69.5	58.0	96.0	38.1
Charlotte/Mecklenburg	46824	43.6	46.4	48.5	87.1	38.6
Chatham County	3332	23.9	63.0	50.8	83.5	32.7
Cherokee County	1554	1.3	94.3	65.0	86.3	21.3
Clay County	569	0.0	97.4		83.9	
Cleveland County	4563	22.4	75.5	52.4	78.7	26.3
Clinton City	1236	50.2	39.5	58.7	85.2	26.5
Columbus County	3128	38.8	53.1	49.5	74.5	25.1
Craven County	6641	34.2	61.0	63.7	85.2	21.5

School System	Total Number of Students grades 3-8	% Student Population Black grades3-8	% Student Population White grades 3-8	% of Black Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% ofWhite Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% Gap between Black and White Student Performance on Math/ Reading Composite EOG 2001
STATEWIDE	**623703**	**31.8**	**61.0**	**52.0**	**82.0**	**30.0**
Cumberland County	23651	47.1	42.6	57.5	80.6	23.1
Currituck County	1461	9.6	86.7	70.0	87.2	17.2
Dare County	2246	3.5	93.2	52.6	83.0	30.4
Davidson County	9056	2.1	95.4	58.6	78.8	20.2
Davie County	2702	9.0	86.8	53.5	80.4	26.9
Duplin County	3804	35.0	51.1	55.6	81.7	26.1
Durham County	13323	59.4	31.6	53.0	87.1	34.0
Edenton/Chowan	1116	49.8	48.4	50.2	78.9	28.7
Edgecombe County	3527	58.7	38.5	41.7	68.9	27.2
Elkin City	506	4.0	86.4	50.0	87.6	37.6
Forsyth County	20179	36.5	54.8	47.9	84.8	36.9
Franklin County	3660	39.0	55.5	45.5	76.8	31.3
Gaston County	14334	19.7	76.2	49.3	74.3	25.0
Gates County	892	40.6	58.2	65.2	83.6	18.4
Graham County	576	0.0	84.5		74.3	
Granville County	3909	39.9	55.4	49.5	78.2	28.6
Greene County	1355	53.4	37.1	55.5	75.5	20.1
Guilford County	29276	40.9	49.9	50.7	84.9	34.2
Halifax County	2532	87.2	6.7	55.0	64.7	9.7
Harnett County	7676	29.3	62.1	52.9	78.2	25.3
Haywood County	3586	0.4	96.0	50.0	79.3	29.3
Henderson County	5226	4.7	86.8	53.5	85.8	32.4
Hertford County	1765	81.4	17.1	46.5	72.2	25.7
Hickory City	2008	26.1	55.5	44.2	83.2	39.0
Hoke County	2893	48.7	30.5	48.3	74.8	26.5
Hyde County	326	46.3	52.5	48.3	85.4	37.0
Iredell-Statesville	8225	18.1	75.4	41.9	76.9	34.9
Jackson County	1653	0.0	86.0		75.0	
Johnston County	9781	20.5	70.9	59.8	85.5	25.7
Jones County	672	55.4	41.4	62.9	76.6	13.7
Kannapolis City	1949	30.1	59.4	48.9	75.1	26.2

Sources: 2000-2001 End of Grade Testing Information from NC Justice Center Calculations on NC DPI Preliminary Data as of March 2002

How Well is Your School System Serving African American Students? *(continued)*

School System	Total Number of Students grades 3-8	% Student Population Black grades3-8	% Student Population White grades 3-8	% of Black Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% ofWhite Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% Gap between Black and White Student Performance on Math/ Reading Composite EOG 2001
Kings Mountain	2163	20.8	74.3	65.6	81.5	15.9
Lee County	4193	25.8	56.5	50.1	81.3	31.2
Lenoir County	4428	48.6	47.3	62.7	85.6	22.9
Lexington City	1348	46.4	30.6	46.8	66.3	19.5
Lincoln County	5057	8.5	83.9	43.1	73.5	30.5
Macon County	1853	0.3	96.4	60.0	79.7	19.7
Madison County	1182	0.0	98.7		79.3	
Martin County	2239	58.2	39.9	42.8	76.9	34.1
McDowell County	3046	4.7	91.0	57.6	76.1	18.4
Mitchell County	1080	0.0	97.8		73.4	
Montgomery County	2078	27.2	54.1	37.7	67.1	29.4
Moore County	5131	23.9	69.5	54.1	84.1	30.0
Mooresville City	1905	18.4	77.5	48.1	86.0	37.8
Mount Airy City	904	11.8	79.9	64.5	87.3	22.8
Nash/Rocky Mount	8004	53.2	41.9	56.0	86.7	30.7
New Hanover County	9482	27.1	68.1	54.4	87.5	33.1
Newton-Conover City	1168	17.5	64.5	57.8	84.1	26.2
Northampton County	1610	81.1	18.1	48.6	77.0	28.4
Onslow County	9444	23.0	65.2	69.3	84.4	15.2
Orange County	2968	23.4	71.3	54.2	82.9	28.7
Pamlico County	739	32.3	65.9	56.9	87.3	30.4
Pasquotank County	2760	48.2	48.7	50.6	80.7	30.1
Pender County	3112	30.1	65.7	65.8	83.3	17.4
Perquimans County	823	38.6	59.8	51.6	80.9	29.3
Person County	2722	38.0	58.4	58.9	84.8	26.0
Pitt County	9206	50.3	45.1	52.5	85.9	33.4
Polk County	1108	6.9	86.7	69.7	84.7	15.0
Randolph County	8258	4.7	88.6	48.8	73.3	24.4

School System	Total Number of Students grades 3-8	% Student Population Black grades3-8	% Student Population White grades 3-8	% of Black Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% ofWhite Students Performing at/above grade level in Both Reading and Math 2001	% Gap between Black and White Student Performance on Math/ Reading Composite EOG 2001
Richmond County	3899	40.0	54.6	43.8	72.3	28.5
Roanoke Rapids City	1414	20.3	76.5	51.2	76.3	25.1
Robeson County	10269	30.8	23.1	49.2	72.4	23.2
Rockingham County	6780	24.9	70.1	49.1	73.4	24.2
Rowan-Salisbury	9469	21.5	72.5	47.3	76.4	29.0
Rutherford County	4576	15.8	81.3	59.7	79.5	19.8
Sampson County	3522	32.8	54.5	57.1	75.8	18.7
Scotland County	3054	43.5	42.5	51.8	78.2	26.4
Shelby City	1447	58.0	38.6	49.8	87.3	37.5
Stanly County	4619	14.5	78.0	49.5	81.2	31.7
Stokes County	3365	5.0	91.9	41.7	73.2	31.6
Surry County	3824	3.1	87.5	62.4	78.3	15.9
Swain County	777	0.0	77.9		79.5	
Thomasville City	1067	47.6	40.5	42.3	64.6	22.3
Transylvania County	1793	5.7	91.0	75.7	88.0	12.3
Tyrrell County	345	46.1	51.9	51.6	84.4	32.8
Union County	10743	16.7	76.8	43.7	84.5	40.9
Vance County	3683	65.1	30.4	43.7	72.7	29.0
Wake County	45146	26.1	64.5	58.1	92.5	34.4
Warren County	1532	75.4	18.4	48.7	69.5	20.8
Washington County	1043	73.7	24.7	36.9	74.0	37.1
Watauga County	2229	0.9	96.3	75.0	88.9	13.9
Wayne County	8624	42.8	50.7	51.8	79.7	27.9
Weldon City	557	94.8	3.1	41.5	52.9	11.5
Whiteville City	1240	43.6	51.9	52.9	82.0	29.1
Wilkes County	4575	4.3	90.9	53.0	75.8	22.8
Wilson County	5315	53.2	40.8	61.9	89.4	27.5
Yadkin County	2637	4.2	87.3	55.9	77.0	21.1
Yancey County	1120	0.0	97.1		83.2	

Sources: 2000-2001 End of Grade Testing Information from NC Justice Center Calculations on NC DPI Preliminary Data as of March 2002

How Well is Your School System Serving Hispanic Students?

School System	Total Number of Students grades 3-8	% Student Population White grades 3-8	% Student Population Hispanic grades 3-8	%White Students Performing at/above grade level on MATH/ READING EOG Composite	% Hispanic Students Performing at/above grade level on MATH/ READING EOG Composite	% Gap Between White and Hispanic Students Performance on MATH/ READING EOG Composite
SCHOOL SYSTEMS WITH TOP 15 LARGEST HISPANIC STUDENT POPULATIONS GRADES 3-8						
STATEWIDE	**623703**	**61.0**	**4.3**	**82.0**	**58.7**	**23.3**
Asheboro City	1964	64.2	16.4	82.4	50.2	32.2
Lee County	4193	56.5	14.9	81.3	51.4	29.9
Montgomery County	2078	54.1	13.8	67.1	47.2	19.9
Lexington City	1348	30.6	13.5	66.3	43.4	22.9
Duplin County	3804	51.1	13.3	81.7	61.2	20.5
Sampson County	3522	54.5	9.9	75.8	66.7	9.1
Chatham County	3332	63.0	9.7	83.5	49.8	33.6
Greene County	1355	37.1	8.9	75.5	48.3	27.2
Thomasville City	1067	40.5	8.7	64.6	57.0	7.6
Newton-Conover City	1168	64.5	8.4	84.1	72.4	11.6
Yadkin County	2637	87.3	8.0	77.0	46.9	30.1
Surry County	3824	87.5	7.8	78.3	59.0	19.3
Kannapolis City	1949	59.4	7.0	75.1	55.1	20.0
Johnston County	9781	70.9	6.6	85.5	67.1	18.5
Elkin City	506	86.4	6.5	87.6	51.5	36.1
SELECT URBAN SCHOOL SYSTEMS						
STATEWIDE	**623703**	**61.0**	**4.3**	**82.0**	**58.7**	**23.3**
Charlotte/Mecklenburg	46824	46.4	4.7	87.1	56.8	30.3
Cumberland County	23651	42.6	5.0	80.6	71.5	9.1
Durham County	13323	31.6	4.5	87.1	52.0	35.1
Forsyth County	20179	54.8	5.4	84.8	47.6	37.2
Guilford County	29276	49.9	2.6	84.9	59.3	25.6
Wake County	45146	64.5	3.7	92.5	65.9	26.6

Sources: 2000-2001 End of Grade Testing Information from
NC Justice Center Calculations on NC DPI Preliminary Data as of March 2002

How Well is Your School System Serving Native-American Students?

School System	Total Number of Students grades 3-8	% Student Population White grades 3-8	% Student Population Native-American grades 3-8	%White Students Performing at/above grade level on MATH/ READING EOG Composite	% Native-American Students Performing at/above grade level on MATH/ READING EOG Composite	% Gap Between White and Native-American Students Performance on MATH/ READING EOG Composite
STATEWIDE	**623703**	**61.0**	**1.5**	**82.0**	**60.0**	**22.0**
Clinton City	1236	39.5	3.5	85.2	69.8	15.5
Columbus County	3128	53.1	5.5	74.5	64.5	10.0
Cumberland County	23651	42.6	1.7	80.6	59.6	21.0
Graham County	576	84.5	14.9	74.3	73.3	1.1
Halifax County	2532	6.7	5.6	64.7	68.1	-3.4
Hertford County	1765	17.1	1.0	72.2	64.7	7.5
Hoke County	2893	30.5	13.7	74.8	48.2	26.6
Jackson County	1653	86.0	10.4	75.0	63.4	11.6
Onslow County	9444	65.2	1.2	84.4	81.0	3.4
Richmond County	3899	54.6	2.0	72.3	50.6	21.7
Robeson County	10269	23.1	42.7	72.4	57.2	15.2
Sampson County	3522	54.5	1.6	75.8	63.2	12.6
Scotland County	3054	42.5	11.9	78.2	55.1	23.1
Swain County	777	77.9	20.1	79.5	73.7	5.8
Warren County	1532	18.4	4.2	69.5	63.1	6.4

Sources: 2000-2001 End of Grade Testing Information from
NC Justice Center Calculations on NC DPI Preliminary Data as of March 2002

End notes

1 In his 1999 State of the State Address, Governor Jim Hunt challenged North Carolina to become First in Education by the year 2010. Current Governor Mike Easley and his education cabinet continue to commit to this goal.

2 *SAT Report: The North Carolina 2001 Scholastic Assessment Test Report*, Raleigh, NC: Department of Public Instruction, Published 2001.

3 Ten or more days

4 *Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions 2000-2001*, Division of Accountability Services, Raleigh, NC: Department of Public Instruction, Published February 2002.

5 *Ibid.*

6 Barbara Ries Wager, "No More Suspensions: Creating a Shared Ethical Culture," *Educational Leadership*, December 1992/January 1993, pp. 34-37.

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.*

9 Russ Skiba & Reece Peterson, "The Dark Side of Zero Tolerance: Can Punishment Lead to Safe Schools?," *Phi Delta Kappan*, January 1999, available at <http:www.pdkintl.org/kappan/kski9901.htm#7.

10 *Ibid.*

11 *Dropout Data Report 2000-2001*, Instructional and Accountability Services, Raleigh, NC: Department of Public Instruction, Published March 2002.

12 United States Census Bureau, *Educational Attainment in the United States: 1997*, Washington DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, Economics and Statistics.

13 *Ibid.*

14 http://www.dropoutprevention.org/2levelpages/downloads/dod-syn.pdf, report commissioned by US Department of Education, 1998.

15 William Darity, Domini Castellino, Karolyn Tyson, *Increasing Opportunity to Learn via Access to Rigorous Courses and Programs: One Strategy for Closing the Achievement Gap for At-risk and Ethnic Minority Students.* Report prepared for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and submitted to the North Carolina State Board of Education. Raleigh, N.C.: NCDPI, 2001

16 *Minority Achievement Report: Trends in Subgroup Performance*, Raleigh, NC: Department of Public Instruction, Published 2001.

17 Leslie T. Fenwick, *Patterns of Excellence: Policy Perspectives on Diversity in Teaching and School Leadership*, November 2001 available at http://www.sefatl.org/patternsmonograph.pdf.

18 *Recruitment and Retention of Minority Teachers*, available at http://www.nea.org/recruit/minority.

19 See, for example Lisa Delpit, *Other People's Children: Cultural Conflict in the Classroom*, New York, N.Y.: The New Press, 1995.

20 Linda Darling-Hammond, *Teacher Quality and Student Achievement: A Review of State Policy Evidence*, (Arizona State University: Education Policy Analysis Archives, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2000); M. Allen, & R. Palaich, *In Pursuit of Quality Teaching: Five Strategies for Policymakers*, (Denver, CO: Education Commission of the States, 2000), available at: http://www.ecs.org/initiatives/geringer/Geringer%20Initiative%20Final.pdf.

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About the Justice Center

The North Carolina Justice and Community Development Center (Justice Center) is a non-profit, non-partisan organization founded and governed by low-income people, non-profit groups and legal and community leaders. The Justice Center is dedicated to helping low-income and working poor North Carolinians escape poverty and achieve economic security. It includes several well-known projects within its umbrella and is professionally staffed by a team of lawyers, community educators and policy analysts who advocate on important public policy issues before state and local governments; conduct research and publish analyses on important public policy issues; provide direct education and training in order to empower non-profits and community groups; and represent individual low-income clients and groups of clients in important litigation with statewide impact.

The Justice Center is the only non-profit in North Carolina that seeks to bring such a comprehensive approach to helping low-income people achieve economic security.

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